

United States Department of the Interior
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places
Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations of eligibility for individual properties or districts. See instructions in *Guidelines for Completing National Register Forms* (National Register Bulletin 16). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the requested information. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, styles, materials, and areas of significance, enter only the categories and subcategories listed in the instructions. For additional space use continuation sheets (Form 10-900a). Type all entries.

1. Name of Property

historic name Belleville United States Post Office
other names/site number Same

2. Location

street & number 1119 18th Street ☐ not for publication
city, town Belleville ☐ vicinity
state Kansas code KS county Republic code 157 zip code 66935

3. Classification

Ownership of Property	Category of Property	Number of Resources within Property	
<input type="checkbox"/> private	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	Contributing	Noncontributing
<input type="checkbox"/> public-local	<input type="checkbox"/> district	<u>1</u>	<u> </u> buildings
<input type="checkbox"/> public-State	<input type="checkbox"/> site	<u> </u>	<u> </u> sites
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> public-Federal	<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<u> </u>	<u> </u> structures
	<input type="checkbox"/> object	<u>1</u>	<u> </u> objects
			<u> </u> Total

Name of related multiple property listing:
Kansas Post Offices that contain Treasury
Department Section Artwork, 1936-1942

Number of contributing resources previously
listed in the National Register 0

4. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this
☒ nomination ☐ request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the
National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60.
In my opinion, the property ☒ meets ☐ does not meet the National Register criteria. ☐ See continuation sheet.
Ramon Powers State Historic Preservation Officer December 9, 1988
Signature of certifying official Date
Kansas State Historical Society
State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property ☐ meets ☐ does not meet the National Register criteria. ☐ See continuation sheet.

Signature of commenting or other official

Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

5. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby, certify that this property is:

☐ entered in the National Register.

☐ See continuation sheet.

☐ determined eligible for the National
Register. ☐ See continuation sheet.

☐ determined not eligible for the
National Register.

☐ removed from the National Register.

☐ other, (explain:)

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

157-0430-0007

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (enter categories from instructions)

Government: post office

Current Functions (enter categories from instructions)

Government: post office

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(enter categories from instructions)

20th Century Revival: Classical
Revival

Materials (enter categories from instructions)

foundation Brick

walls Brick

roof Asphalt

other Stone: limestone

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

The Belleville United States Post Office (c. 1937-1938) is located at 119 18th Street in Belleville, Republic County, Kansas (pop. 2,805). The one-story ridge hipped, red brick building has a southern facade orientation. The building measures approximately sixty feet from east to west and one hundred and ten feet from north to south. A double door pierces the center of the building's facade. Steps lead up to the doorway. Two pairs of large, double hung windows surmounted by plain brick lintels and underscored by limestone sills flank the doorway. Nine windows of similar treatment pierce the east and west elevations of the building. A loading dock projects off the building's rear. This post office is an example of the smaller class C or D standardized design type that was repeated throughout the county during the 1930s.

The mural "Kansas Stream" was installed on the east wall of the Belleville Post Office lobby above the postmaster's door and the two bulletin boards which flank it. This is the traditional location for Section artwork in the smaller class C and D post offices. "Kansas Stream" is an oil on canvas mural of a scene on the Republican River near Scandia. Four horses stand on a dusty clay bank above a winding stream. Gnarled green trees and shrubbery rise from the lavender earth, filling the space across the center of the canvas. White clouds billow in the blue sky on this hot summer day. The mural measured 13' x 4'4" before installation, a cornice moulding surmounts it. The mural does not arch around the doorway surround as in so many cases, but rests on top of it.

The mural was installed on September 27, 1939. It was not varnished. The treatment for cleaning recommended by the artist called for the use of pure water, Ivory soap, and a soft brush. In August, 1973 the mural's condition was assessed as good, it remains as such and according to current information has not been restored.

A varnished, wooden vestibule projects into the lobby, cutting off some view of the mural. This is a traditional design feature found in most of the post offices included in this nomination. The floors and wainscoting retain their original tiles. The post master's door and bulletin boards retain their varnished surrounds. The original hanging light fixtures have been replaced with almost flush mounted fluorescent lights.

☐ See continuation sheet

8. Statement of Significance

Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties:

☐ nationally ☒ statewide ☒ locally

Applicable National Register Criteria ☒ A ☐ B ☒ C ☐ D

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions) ☐ A ☐ B ☐ C ☐ D ☐ E ☐ F ☐ G

Areas of Significance (enter categories from instructions)

Art

Politics/Government

Social History

Period of Significance

1939

1939

1939

Significant Dates

1939

1939

1939

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Significant Person

N/A

Architect/Builder

Sandzen, Birger: Artist

Simon, Louis: Supervising Architect

State significance of property, and justify criteria, criteria considerations, and areas and periods of significance noted above.

The Belleville United States Post Office (c. 1937-1938) is being nominated to the National Register as part of the Kansas Post Office Artwork (1936-1942) Thematic Resources nomination at the local and state levels of significance under criteria A and C for its historical association with the Treasury Department's Section program and for the artistic significance of the mural that it contains. The mural, "Kansas Stream", was painted by Lindsborg, Kansas artist Birger Sandzen (1871-1954) in 1939.

"Kansas Stream" is an oil on canvas mural of a scene on the Republican River near Scandia. Four horses stand on a dusty, clay bank above a winding stream. Gnarled green trees and shrubbery rise from the lavender earth, filling the space across the center of the canvas. White clouds billow in the blue sky on this hot summer day. Sandzen takes a familiar regional scene from north central Kansas, making the ordinary extraordinary by his attention to light and color. The colors are bright and naturalistic. "Kansas Stream" is typical of Sandzen's landscapes of the 1930s. Sandzen is classified as a post impressionist landscape artist who painted in a style reminiscent of Van Gogh. Similar landscape murals hang in the Lindsborg and Halstead post offices. "Kansas Stream" is representative of the realistic illustrative landscape paintings that were funded under the Section program.

Sandzen is regarded as one of the most prominent Kansas landscape artists, deriving his national reputation mainly from his lithographs, woodcuts, linocuts, and dry points. Sandzen found guidance and teachings in nature, and studied the Kansas landscapes around him. He believed in the accessibility of art for the general public, and sold many of his own pieces to raise money for the purchase of works by other artists. Sandzen was one of a group of artists who founded the Prairie Print Makers, a group that espoused the theory of the accessibility of art for the common man. Although Sandzen gained national fame in the 1920s, and was elected as an associate member of the Taos Society, he continued to live in Lindsborg, where he had taught language and art at Bethany College since his immigration from Sweden in 1894.

☒ See continuation sheet

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Continuation Sheet**

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Community reaction to the mural is recorded in the September 28, 1939 issue of the Belleville Telescope, the writer calling it "a realistic interpretation of a lazy, Kansas stream rounding the bend in its typically crooked path." The "Sandzen individuality" and the "fiery, tempetuous colors" are also noted. The post master reported that public reaction to the mural was generally favorable, although there were some who objected to the "Sandzen detail".

Sandzen received the contract for the mural on May 26, 1939. The mural was installed on September 27, 1939 on the east wall of the post office above the post master's door and the two bulletin boards that flank it. It measured 13' x 4' before installation, a wide cornice moulding surmounts the mural. The mural does not arch around the doorway surround as in so many cases, but rests on top of it. Sandzen received \$670 for the commission. The Belleville Post Office is an example of one of the many smaller class C or D type post offices that received Section artwork in Kansas.

Please see the Kansas Post Office Artwork (1936-1942) Thematic Resources cover nomination for additional information.

9. Major Bibliographical References

Belleville Telescope, 28 September 1939.

Falk, Peter Hastings. Who Was Who in American Art, (Madison, Ct: Soundview Press, 1985).

General Services Administration. Treasury Department Section Records - Kansas Post Offices. Belleville, Kansas.

Kansas City Star, 11 July 1939.

Samuels, Peggy and Harold. The Illustrated Biographical Encyclopedia of Artists of the American West. (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1976).

Spencer, Howard Dalee. Birger Sandzen: A Retrospective. (Wichita: Wichita Art Museum, 1985).

☒ See continuation sheet

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

☐ preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested

☐ previously listed in the National Register

☐ previously determined eligible by the National Register

☐ designated a National Historic Landmark

☐ recorded by Historic American Buildings

Survey # _____

☐ recorded by Historic American Engineering

Record # _____

Primary location of additional data:

☒ State historic preservation office

☐ Other State agency

☐ Federal agency

☐ Local government

☐ University

☐ Other

Specify repository:

Kansas State Historical Society

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of property Less than 1 acre.

UTM References

A 1 4 6 1 7 0 4 0 4 4 0 8 9 4 5
Zone Easting Northing

C

B
Zone Easting Northing

D

☐ See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

The nominated property is located on Lots 3-6, Block 18, Belleville, Kansas. The property is bounded to the north by a vacant alley, to the south by 18th Street, to the east by L Street, and to the west by a vacant alley.

☐ See continuation sheet

Boundary Justification

The boundary includes the entire parcel that is historically associated with the property.

☐ See continuation sheet

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Martha Hagedorn-Krass, Architectural Historian

organization Kansas State Historical Society

date December 9, 1988

street & number 120 W. 10th

telephone 913-296-5264

city or town Topeka

state Kansas

zip code 66612

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National Park Service

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Continuation Sheet

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Svedlow, Dr. Anthony V. (Mulvane Gallery, Washburn University, Topeka, Kansas).
Personal interview with Martha Hagedorn-Krass, January 8, 1988.